

SAINT
JULIAN'S ABBEY.

A NOVEL.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. LANE, Leadenhall-Street;

MDCCLXXXVIII.



ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

LETTER I.

ELIZA ST. JULIAN
TO
LADY ANN HOWARD.

St. Julian's Abbey.

WHY will not you come to us,
my dear Lady Ann? Is it,
that emerged in the gaities of a
Court, you tremble at the idea of
solitude? Has friendship then no
VOL. I. B longer

longer any charms for you? What a change of sentiment! How often have you protested to us, that the happiest moments of your life were those spent at St. Julian's Abbey, where pomp and splendour are changed for peace and contentment. My father has taught me the real value of the blessings I possess; by sad experience he has found, that wealth and titles are of themselves insufficient to insure happiness; that the most elevated station cannot secure us from the machinations of envy: He no longer sighs for those honours so unjustly forfeited, though he still holds in detestation the authors of his disgrace, and the name of Percy will

will ever be odious to his ear. I have ventured to observe to him, that it is generous to forgive, and, if possible, to forget an injury; but on that theme alone am I silenced. What a pleasure would your society be to me! I am often alone; my father is busied in superintending his labourers, and almost lives in his woods: You would find many alterations since your last visit, I might add, improvements; the grounds are in full beauty—come and judge; convince me that my suspicions are ill-founded, and that you are still the very same Lady Ann, who was ever so tenderly, so justly beloved by

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

B 2

LET-

LETTER II.

LADY ANN

TO

ELIZA.

St. James's Square.

SPARE your reproaches, dearest Eliza, these are undeserved; though bred in a Court, sincerity is my characteristic; unchangeable in my nature; warm in my attachments: How could you, for a moment, harbour the idea that
the

the dear retirement of the Abbey, and the society of my best friends should be irksome to me? I would postpone my intended visit as a mark of my displeasure, should I not, by so doing, punish myself more than you. I returned late last night from an assembly at the Queen Dowager's; your father was for some time the topic of conversation, and his exemplary mode of life described: "But tell us of his daughter, cried one of the company, I have heard she has all the graces of her father, without that severe inflexibility, that stubborn obstinacy of will, which rendered him unpleasing to many; in short, that she has that winning softness

which her late mother so eminently possessed, with a superior share of beauty. Tell us impartially, Lady Ann, if the voice of fame has too highly blazoned forth her merits? if not, what an ornament would she be to our Court!" My answer I shall not repeat, it was listened to with eager attention, and received with more satisfaction from the men than the women.

I am sick of an endless round of dissipation, of unmeaning compliments, where the heart has no share: I long for the day of my departure. Adieu,

ANN HOWARD.

LET.

LETTER III.

COUNT DE ST. JULIAN

TO

LORD RAYMOND.

St. Julian's Abbey.

TALK not to me, my good
Lord Raymond, of im-
proving the favourable impres-
sions the Monarch has received of
me! Talk not to me of returning
greatness, vain honours, trifling
distinctions! My soul disdains
B 4 them!

them ! Never more will I expose myself to the caprices of fortune, and for an airy bubble, sacrifice the remains of that happiness which the inveteracy of Northumberland could not rob me of : And am I yet so little known to you ? Has not a friendship commenced in the very earliest period of our lives (and which will, I trust, end but with them) taught you to believe that death, with all its train of horrors, would be more welcome to my embrace, than that justly hated Lord ?

What new design does he meditate against my peace ? What dark and treacherous purpose is veiled

veiled under this pretended wish of reconciliation? Banished from my King, deprived of my honours, my estate confiscated; I imagined my humiliation would be no greater: I was wrong; the proffered friendship of the villain, who was the cause of all, is a wound still more cutting. Tell him, my friend, that the soul of St. Julian is above him!

B 5 LET-

LETTER IV.

RAYMOND

TO

ST. JULIAN.

Pall-Mall.

LET all former animosities
be buried with Northum-
berland, my friend ! he lived but
to receive your refusal of his offers.
Percy ! the brave, the gallant Per-
cy ! the pride and glory of our
Court, sues for your friendship ;
sighs

sighs at the recollection of the injuries you have received, and burns with ardour to atone, in some measure by his conduct, for the calamities heaped upon you by his family.

His Majesty is already more than half convinced of your worth: Fortune will amply repay you for her past frowns. Do not turn a deaf ear to the solicitations of friendship; and should even its pleadings prove vain, let the voice of Nature urge you to improve the favourable moment; consider your daughter. Is the remote solitude of your Abbey a fit residence for Eliza St. Julian? She who is

B 6

formed

formed to grace the most elevated station, to dispense happiness around her, and convince the admiring multitude, that to be truly great, is to be good. Her education has been a happy one; brought up under the eye of a parent so capable, so willing to form the mind to every virtue. What rapturous emotions will you feel, on beholding the darling of your heart raised to those honours she is by her birth, still more by her merit, entitled to! How sweetly will she reward you for every anxious attention; for every eager wish, and fond solicitude! Can you be insensible to all these delights?

Can

Can you persist in nourishing a rancorous sentiment for one whose only crime is bearing the name you hate? Surely the mind of St. Julian is too much enlightened by wisdom! is too just!

RAYMOND.

LET-

LETTER V.

ST. JULIAN

TO

LORD RAYMOND.

St. Julian's Abbey.

AND do you still persist in urging me on a subject my heart must ever revolt at? Does *Lord Raymond* prove himself my most cruel tormentor, and deprive me of that serenity of mind I had with difficulty acquired? Flexi-
bility

bility was *never* my characteristic, and I am *too old* to endeavour to form a new model for my mind. The death of the Earl to me, is nothing; the merits of his son are equally uninteresting; but his boasted greatness shall *never* be augmented by the submission of St. Julian: the hate I bear him is fixed, hereditary, and I will carry it to *my tomb*. To be plain with you, my Lord, though you hold the next place to Eliza in my heart, yet, sooner than be subjected to such odious solicitations, I will renounce an intercourse which has constituted the chief happiness of my life. It rests with you, therefore, to determine

16 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

termine if I am to continue to assure Lord Raymond, he is considered as the best beloved friend of

ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER VI.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

WHAT pity that the joys
of meeting should so soon
be embittered by the pangs of part-
ing! Dearest Lady Ann, how I
figh for your loved society! With
what a melancholy sort of pleasure
do I tread your accustomed walks!
seated

seated by your favourite waterfall, at the foot of the large oak, memory brings back to me your every look and action, and involuntary tears fall from my eyes: my father chides me for my melancholy, though his own was visible for several days after your departure. You were ever a favourite, and often pointed out to me as an example; happy should I think myself, if my endeavours at copying the dear original have at all succeeded. Our family is augmented by the arrival of a visitor, the Marquis of Lothian, he has been with us for two days, and will remain a week longer; we should not too hastily form our
judg-

judgment of a character, or I should pronounce him morose, artful, with a long train of disagreeable et ceteras: this I may venture to say, his appearance is not prepossessing, nor are his manners more engaging; he affects to despise our sex, to consider them merely as the amusement of an idle hour, and below the attention of the Lords of the creation. Perhaps you will impute my unfavourable description to slighted vanity; if so, you will greatly wrong me; I am both willing and happy to dispense with the assiduity of his Lordship, which I feel would be intolerably irksome to me. We had a little rural festival last night, the

the occasion of which, was the marriage of that beautiful peasant you admired so greatly. Her husband is son to one of the tenants of my father, who desired the wedding should be celebrated at the Abbey: they danced on the green which extends to the north wood. The evening was uncommonly beautiful, the moon shone in full brightness, its beams reflected on the waters, and silvered o'er the cascade that empties itself, with such impetuosity, into the lake; they all looked so happy, that their joy communicated itself to my father and myself: he proposed I should join the dance, and the Marquis offered me his hand; he

he even affected to be gallant, but the attempt did not succeed, and I was not sorry to spare him the trouble of assuming a character so foreign to his nature, and myself that of listening to his uninteresting compliments, by complaining of fatigue, and taking the arm of my father, who sends you his kindest wishes. Write, and tell me of your occupations, of your amusements, and continue to love your

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER VII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

MY dear Lady Ann, I have experienced such terrors, such agonizing terrors, since I last wrote to you ; good Heavens, what have I not endured ! My father

father (hear and pity me) has been dangerously wounded, and could not possibly have escaped with life, but for the kind assistance of a stranger, who joined him the very moment he was sinking under the barbarous fury of three ruffians: They had concealed themselves in the far woods, and suddenly surrounded him, as he was returning from visiting Dr. Edgecomb. I was reading in the library, when a violent tumult in the hall occasioned me to hurry to the place from whence it proceeded, and what a sight presented itself before me! my father covered with blood! and half fainting with weakness, supported by a youth whose

whose cloaths were likewise discoloured: my reason nearly forsook me, my strength failed me, I sunk to the ground, and could scarcely be said to live, till the surgeons assured me, his wounds, tho' deep, were not dangerous, and the extreme goodness of his constitution removed every shadow of fear. The young stranger has joined me in attending him with unremitted care; what gratitude do I owe him, dear Lady Ann! to him am I indebted for my valuable parent: he has saved a life dearer to me than my own. My father was yesterday able to be moved to his dressing-room; we were with him, and
our

our conversation turned upon the circumstances of the late horrible attempt ; you know the warmth of his temper ; you may, therefore, form some idea of the honest effusions of his grateful heart : “ But I am yet ignorant of the name of my preserver,” said he, “ I could almost wish that Fortune had not been so profuse in her gifts as Nature, that I may have an opportunity of evincing by my actions, as well as words, that due sense I have of the service rendered me !” I thought the young man looked distressed at the enquiry ; he answered with hesitation : “ No longer will I blame Fortune in being unkind, since she has given me the

VOL. I. C glory

glory and delight of serving you. I have little else to boast than a descent from one of the most ancient Houses in Britain, my name is Courtney; I shall endeavour to prove myself not unworthy of it. I leave you, my Lord, to offer my services to my King; to-morrow I unwillingly bid you farewell." "By no means," replied my father, "I cannot consent to lose you so soon; confer one more obligation upon me, by prolonging your stay for some weeks in my Castle; though a banished man, yet am I not entirely destitute of friends; it may be in my power to be of some slight utility to
you,

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY. 27

you, by the warmth of my recommendations."

Mr. Courtney willingly consented, and is to be our guest till the beginning of next month.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Continue to love your

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

C 2

LET-

LETTER VIII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

YOU are interested in favour of this stranger; you already esteem, and almost love him. You command me to depict to you the form that incloses such a valuable mind. You shall be obeyed, dear Lady Ann, to the

the utmost extent of my feeble power : but how can I give you an adequate idea of the extreme gracefulness and dignity blended in the figure of Mr. Courtney. His height is considerably above the middle size, finely proportioned ; his face, without being regularly beautiful, both creates admiration and respect ; a certain *bautéur*, which is visible through his person, and would strike each beholder with awe, is so sweetly tempered by the mild placidity of his countenance, while his large and penetrating black eyes seem to be able to develope the most secret sentiments of the soul. His manners are so

refined, his conversation so pleasing, so interesting, so—but whether does my warmth of gratitude carry me? My friend will laugh at my enthusiasm, while I am convinced my colouring is not sufficiently strong. My father is enchanted with our guest, and declares, that in so young a man, he never before met with such solidity of judgment, such extensive and universal knowledge. He often says, “ That should even the villains be apprehended, who were the occasion of Courtenay’s glorious valour being exerted, he could almost pardon them the wounds they had given, as they had been the means of bringing

ing him such a treasure." Rejoice with me, my friend, on this dear parent's recovery; he is so much better, as to be able to accompany us in an evening's walk.



What a soul has Courtney!
 Oh! Lady Ann! Had you been witness to the scene I have just viewed, you would join in the exclamation. We rambled thro' the grounds for some time, till my father proposed our visiting the cottage of Amy, whose marriage

C 4

riage I before mentioned to you : Our road to it lay by several small dwellings, occupied by our dependants ; at the door of one of them sat an old man, surrounded by several children, who, in the first moment they perceived Courtney, ran to embrace his knees, and bless him ; he would have put them by, and passed on ; but it was in vain, the tide of gratitude was too impetuous to be stopped.

My father demanded an explanation.

Courtney carelessly replied :

“ The

“ The service he had rendered, was trifling, they infinitely over-rated it.”

“ Oh ! no,” (cried the old man) “ he is our preserver, though he disowns the title. Pardon, my good Lord, the errors of youth, and the follies of my son shall be made known unto you. Enabled by your bounty, and the labours of his hands, to support his aged father, his wife, his children : Happiness smiled on our dwelling : How oft, when seated in the midst of my family, have I recounted the hardships and dangers of youth ! The battles I have been engaged in, when the flame of

war-raged in our now peaceful country: How have I contrasted the present tranquillity of our lives, with the turbulent commencement of mine; and we have thanked Heaven for its bounty, and blessed you as its instrument! When the arrival of the Marquis of Lothian, at the Abbey, destroyed the happiness which we enjoyed; his domestics, wild and unprincipled, ranged about your lands, and chance conducted one of them to our dwelling; he admired the beauty of my daughter-in-law, but his admiration was attended with insult; he was heated with liquor, and one of our neighbours drove him from
the

the cottage. My son on his return from labour, was made acquainted with this. Early in the morning he went to the Abbey, but the Marquis departed the preceding evening. He concealed his rage for that day; the next day he was missing: Our horror is undescribable! For some days we remained in suspense, till the horrid confirmation reached us: He had followed the Marquis to his seat; the domestic, though a favourite of his Lord, was a coward; my son struck him, he returned not the blow, but would have fled: Blinded by fury, my son pursued, and levelled him with the

C 6

ground,

ground, redoubling his blows, till the dastardly soul seemed gone for ever. In this situation they were discovered, and my ill-fated Edmund hurried to prison, from which there was no prospect of his being released, though his adversary soon recovered, not having received any material injury. My poor daughter, considering herself as the fatal cause of all this mischief, delayed not a moment, but set off for the abode of her husband, accompanied by her eldest boy. The first account I received, was, that having caught the jail distemper, they were in a condition capable of exciting pity from the most obdurate. I had delayed

layed applying to you, my Lord, and entreating you to exert your influence with the Marquis to release my son, fearful his rashness would excite your anger; but at this moment every idea vanished, except the misery of my children, and I set off for the Abbey, where the first news I heard, was, that unhappy accident which plunged all your faithful vassals into the deepest affliction. My grief was now too violent for concealment. Chance threw me in the way of this worthy gentleman, he kindly promised me assistance; by his interest the prison doors were thrown open; my children restored to me; by his bounty
was

was I able to provide for their wants; returning health has blessed them, and our generous preserver has showered down such rich gifts upon us, that we are happy for life."

Dear Lady Ann, had you seen the countenance of my father, the pleasure, the admiration it expressed, while he congratulated Courtnay on the possession of such an invaluable heart, how you would have loved him! He rallied Courtnay upon his having been guilty of some little duplicity towards him, in declaring his ancestry was all he had to boast, when both fortune and friends
must

must be his, to have enabled him to perform the benevolent action. He replied, not in a tone of his accustomed sweetness and vivacity, and seemed impatient to be gone; we therefore left the happy family, and returned to the Abbey. How ardently did I long for the hour of retirement to impart to you this little history. Are not you charmed with our visitor? Send me all the news of the Court; this long epistle authorizes me to demand it. Farewell,

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET.

LETTER IX.

LADY ANN

TO

ELIZA.

St. James's Square.

WHAT a wonderful being is
this Courtney, my Eliza!
I almost envy you the glory of
detaining him: depend upon it,
such a character is so very rarely
to be met with here, that you
may

may expect a little army of us females to besiege the Abbey and carry off the youth in triumph.

Seriously, however, I am charmed with his portrait.

Your letter found me preparing for a *fête* given on the marriage of Sir Robert Ratcliffe and Miss Grey. Invention had been tortured for an assemblage of every thing elegant, and his seat, at Richmond, contains it. All the principal nobility attended, and by a whim of the Lady's, we were to appear in masquerade habits, herself and a few others masqued; this whim was entirely unprecedented: numerous

merous were the *jeu d'esprits* upon the occasion, yet as this intended marriage was entirely the wish of the parents of the Lady, and her adorer (who is her senior by above forty years) this trifling, though singular request, was readily complied with. To describe the decorations, dresses, &c. is impossible, it appeared the region of enchantment. Lady Augusta Percy, sister to the Earl of Northumberland, shone fairest among those who graced the assembly; she is beautiful to excess, and strongly resembles her brother, who is the object of universal admiration. How often do I lament that unfortunate inflexibility

lity of your father's, which prevents your knowledge of these charming young people ! At nine o'clock the Bishop of C. made his appearance to unite the parties in indissoluble bonds ; but imagine, if you can, the astonishment of all present ; when the bride elect, pulling off her mask, discovered to our view, instead of Miss Grey, a face entirely unknown to most of you, and which proved to be that of her humble waiting-maid, who in figure exactly resembles her. She delivered a letter to Sir Robert, which, as nearly as I can remember, contained these words :

Fully

“ Fully sensible, most worthy Sir, of your many virtues, which above three score years have matured into perfection, can I more fully evince the respect they have inspired me with, than by depriving you of a wife, who would have exposed your patience to ten thousand trials. According to the common course of nature, I must have been left to deplore your loss, and my fortitude sunk under the idea. I have, therefore, resolved to bid you adieu! and as Col. Arcott assures me, nothing is so likely to afford relief to a perturbed mind, as change of scene and objects, he has persuaded me to take a journey towards the north,
and

and kindly offers to accompany me, in order to console myself for the voluntary sacrifice I have made. I consent to his proposal, and when this reaches you, shall be many miles advanced upon my peregrinations.

“ I am, your obliged,

“ And very grateful

“ HENRIETTA GREY.

Oh! for words to convey to you, the consternation of the poor disappointed Sir Robert, at this unexpected and disgraceful misfortune. We all retreated as fast as it was possible. To avoid the indul-

indulgence of our visible emotions, was almost impossible; and to have gratified those emotions would have been cruel.

You may relate this to your father, the parties are not unknown to him. To add to the sorrow of Lord and Lady Grey, this Col. Arcott is a wild and dissipated soldier of fortune; the last man in the world, they would have chosen for their son-in-law. The plan of the mask, &c. &c. was, I dare venture to say, of his forming: I do not think the Lady's brain sufficiently prolific; but, as she is the heiress of
of

of large possessions, it was worth the trouble he has taken.

I had almost forgot to tell you the Earl of Salisbury is returned from his travels, and was the other day presented to his Majesty: he is quite the rage of the day, and, indeed, with justice, for I confess I scarcely ever beheld his equal; I dare match him against your wonderful Courtnay, with regard to the external; of his mind I can say nothing, as our acquaintance is but slight; he eclipses all but Percy, and Percy is the wonder of the present age.

Your

48 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

Your father would not easily
forgive me this eulogium, but it
is a true one.

Adieu,

My best beloved friend,

ANN HOWARD.

LET-

LETTER X.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

MY father, Mr. Courtney, and myself, were seated in that little building, which is sacred to friendship, when your letter was brought me; impatient to peruse it's contents, I broke the seal, and read some parts to my

VOL. I.

D

com-

companions : I could not avoid joining in the wish that our ancient feuds, with the Northumberland, were at an end : My father's brow was instantly overcast. “ Eliza, he said, have not I, in all things, consulted your happiness ? Are not you convinced that you are the only tie which attaches me to earth ; that I could even yield up my life, if, by so doing, it would ensure your felicity ? Why then do you continue to harrow up my soul with fruitless wishes ? I once more repeat, the name of Percy is a stab to my peace ; it is a sound of horror, and I sicken at it : On your duty I charge you
to

to be silent." I obeyed, but Courtney dared to expostulate with him. How satisfactory even his arguments! How persuasive his eloquence! But they were both ineffectual; though, in the warmth of his zeal to oblige me, he worked himself into an agitation, almost amounting to passion: My father in a fit of anger left us. I endeavoured to calm my kind champion, which I soon effected. We remained till the dusky shades of night began to warn us to return; we talked of nothing but yourself and the Percys, my sweet friend. Mr. Courtney is well acquainted with your character,

rafter ; he likewise adds, he has seen you ; surely had your eye but glanced on him, Lady Ann, you would have recollected it ; his figure is too interesting to be forgotten ; for talk what you will of this Lord Salisbury, this “ Percy, the wonder of the age ; ” yet, surely ! oh ! surely ! they can never equal Courtnay. He has joined to the most polished address, which could be gained by a long residence in the highest of circles, all that sweet affability, that open frankness, which so forcibly engages the heart.

Farewell,

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

L E T-

LETTER XI.

LADY ANN

TO

ELIZA.

St. James's Square.

YES, my fair friend, I give credit to your assertion; I entirely subscribe to your opinion, that Courtney possesses all that is necessary "to engage most forcibly the heart." You speak very feelingly on the subject; I doubt

D 3

not,

not, for, indeed, my Eliza, permit me to tell you (though most likely the discovery has before been made by yourself) that this most worthy of human beings is no better than a thief, and a successful one too. Answer me a question with sincerity: Are you any longer mistress of your heart? Lord Salisbury is our constant visitor, and, if possible, improves upon acquaintance; his conversation is delightful, and he is a general favourite throughout the family.

Colonel Arcott and his fair bride, are returned from the excursion; of course matrimony
was

was the conclusion of the adventure. They have pleaded their suit to Lord and Lady Grey with great success, and are taken into favour. Poor Sir Robert has never been visible since the masquerade, which is not in the least degree surprising, his mortification considered. Write to me soon I conjure you.

Farewell,

ANN HOWARD.

I have opened my letter ; I cannot send it without the addition of my ardent wishes for your felicity.

D 4

My

My dearest Eliza! pardon me, I would not cast a gloom over your present enjoyments, but I have a thousand fears; they are created by my true affection; my eager sollicitude for your welfare. This Courtnay, I am sure you love him; but you know your father: Do not you think the seeds of ambition are only laid dormant in his breast? Will he approve an attachment, perhaps, incompatible (if fame says true) with his other views? Oh! Consider, my sweet friend, 'ere it be too late, 'ere the fetters become too strong for human force to break.

Once more, farewell.

L E T.

LETTER XII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

YOU have discovered a fatal secret unknown even to myself! Happy ignorance! Oh, why? too cruel friend! Why did you tear off the bandage from my eyes, that concealed the precipices with which I am environed,

D 5

vironed, without the power of extricating myself? It is true, my father owes his life to Court-nay; that he esteems him above all others; yet that he would accept him as the husband of his daughter, I dare not flatter myself with the idea: Besides, what reason have I to suppose Court-nay even wishes for such an event? His attentions to me may be merely the result of his friendly heart, and that respect which our sex in general receive from the other. My mind is a perfect chaos; I know not what to think, or how to act; the barbed arrow is too deeply fixed in my soul, and all my efforts to tear
it

it thence are vain. How tranquil were my days till now !

“ Still as the eas, 'ere winds were taught to
blow,

“ Or moving spirit bade the waters flow.

“ Soft as the slumbers of a Saint forgiven ;

“ And mild as op'ning beams of promis'd
“ Heaven.”

Dear hours of ease and content,
ye are fled for ever !

I throw by my pen, after I
have conjured you to explain to
me those hints concerning the
views of my father.

* * * * *

D 6

Dearest

Dearest and best beloved of friends, congratulate me, partake of my delight! And oh, cast not a damp upon my joy by predicting to me the consequences of an attachment you may stile an imprudent one. For that I love, and am beloved, is now beyond a doubt. I broke off abruptly. I rambled into the wood. In that deep solitude I endeavoured to collect my distracted and scattered ideas, to invoke the All Merciful Being of Omnipotence to enable me to conquer my weakness, yet I felt not the so much wished-for calm. My soul refused to obey the dictates of reason, and it's turbulence resembled the tumultuous waves

waves of the ocean, when the winds of Heaven are let loose and threaten destruction to the unhappy mariner. In this situation I was joined by Courtney: Amazement and horror, for some time, suspended his faculties, till after a few moments silence, he addressed me in the sweetest, most soothing language, entreating my permission to be made a partaker in my sorrows, and if his life could be employed in mitigating one pang I felt, I might freely command it. Utterly unable to declare the *true* cause of my uneasiness, disdaining duplicity too much to alledge a *false* one, I remained silent till his unaffected distress

distress at my obstinacy urged me to entreat his departure; to assure him of my gratitude, though the subject of my grief was what I wished to conceal, and had only to request, that my father might remain unacquainted with it.—

Whether the air of mystery, which seemed couched under these expressions, led him to suppose a lover was in the case, I know not; but his fine features were clouded by the deepest despair, and he replied—

“ I will obey you, Madam, whatever it costs me: Yet, before I bid you an adieu, which shall be an eternal one, permit
me

me to offer you my most eager wishes for your felicity. Charming Eliza, you love! and how enviable is the fate of that mortal you have honoured with a preference! Yet, that you are unhappy is no less certain. Oh! that I had the means of removing your sorrow, though my own will go with me to the grave. I have dared to adore the most perfect of women. I am punished for my presumption. Do not hate me for the avowal; but sometimes condescend to waste one thought upon him, whose youthful hopes are blasted; those hopes were all centered in you. Farewell, Madam, we shall meet no more."

He

He was departing, but I stopped him, unable to bear the idea of his harbouring such mistaken notions. I endeavoured to convince him of his error, though with a resolution of not discovering my own sentiments; but, so little used to deceive, it is not wonderful I acquitted myself most miserably upon the occasion, and Courtnay has too much penetration to be easily imposed upon. I cannot repeat the conversation; suffice it to say, Courtnay is now perfectly convinced of his mistake, and has, I dare venture to affirm, entirely banished every thought of quitting the Abbey. My friend, I should be happy,
com-

completely so, if the addressees of the most beloved of mortals had the sanction of a father's approving blessing. That alone is wanting to the felicity of your

ELIZA.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

L A D Y A N N

T O

E L I Z A.

St. James's Square.

FORGIVE me the uneasiness
I have caused you, dear Eliza,
I flatter myself you will, as your
distress was productive of an
eclaircissement so agreeable to you:
Would to Heaven the obstacle
to

to your felicity was removed, and yourself, and your worthy Courtney, enjoyed the happiness you merit ! Press me no farther on the subject of your father's views ; the reports I have heard, may, very probably, be entirely without foundation ; I give not much credit to the idle rumour of a busy multitude ; the knowledge of them could neither be productive of utility or pleasure to you, or you should not ask in vain.

I will not endeavour to cloud your opening prospects by ill-timed reflections. Far, very far, be it from the hand of friendship
to

to wound the bosom it would willingly guard from every sorrow ! Yet, my Eliza, if I might be permitted to advise, I would wish you to make known this attachment to Lord St. Julian : Concealment is generally the attendant of guilt. Your heart, my friend, contains every thing that is noble, every thing that is virtuous and amiable. Courtney (if his character has not been drawn by the too partial hand of love) merits the glorious preference you have given him. Your father adores his child, and loves this young man ; perhaps he may consent, and then all will be well ; if on the contrary, but I will not anticipate.

ticipate evils which, I hope, may never arrive.

Good Angels ! guard and preserve the friend of my heart from even the very shadow of calamity !

We leave town to-morrow, and I am much pleased to revisit Howard Castle ; it is the sweetest of retreats, St. Julian's Abbey excepted. Lord Salisbury accompanies us, he will be the life of our party, which, I am rather sorry to say, is to be very large.

Write

70 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

Write to me, dear Eliza; I am
all impatience; relieve my fears,
and make me your happy, as
well as affectionate,

ANN HOWARD.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

YOUR friendship is my delight, my pride ; and your advice ever a law with me, dear Lady Ann ! but a circumstance happened the day before it reached me, which rendered it useless.

Read-

Reading in my father's library, I was joined by Courtney; he drew my attention from the work I was perusing, by his own more interesting expressions; proceeding most rapidly on the subject he declares, is ever next his heart, he suddenly stop~~d~~—he looked at me, I comprehended the full meaning of that look; and at one moment we both pronounced the name of my father; our sentiments coincided; we thought like you, Lady Ann, that concealment was criminal, yet the discovery might be fatal; never was perplexity more strongly marked in any countenance than in that of Mr. Courtney,
but

but his noble nature, above disguise, urged him to risk every thing. How pathetically did he express his fears to me! Alas! those fears were mine! When my father suddenly appeared before us; we started, but he quickly put a period to all our uneasiness by thus addressing us—

“ With mingled pride and pleasure have I listened to your conversation. Eliza, you have repaid me for all my cares; Courtnay alone is worthy to reward you. Be happy, my children! May the prayers of the father ascend to the Throne of Mercy, and may the Benignant

VOL. I. E Power

Power smile on the approaching union !”

I confess I was charmed at this almost unexpected good fortune ; Courtnay's delight almost deprived him of reason ; incoherent expressions of gratitude, of wonder, burst from his lips ; he almost doubted the reality of the scene before him, and declared, that to receive Eliza St. Julian, from the hands of her father, was a rapture so exquisite, that while it astonished his senses, it disordered them so greatly, that he must for a time leave us. After his departure, my dear parent again bestowed the highest com-
men-

mendations upon us both, adding, that our union had been the first wish of his heart, ever since the virtues of Courtney had been made known to him; that it was a matter of indifference whether his possessions were trifling or otherwise; the Abbey should be our constant residence, and sheltered in its peaceful woods from the shafts of envious malevolence, and every other peril which we might encounter in the busy and exalted scenes the Court would engage us in, our days would glide on in the bosom of tranquillity.

What an enchanting picture, my friend ! Why are we told that perfect happiness is not the lot of mortals ? *My heart* can contradict the assertion ; *forcibly* contradict it ; for it has not even *one* wish to form, except the continuance of the present blessings. I will praise the Author of all good ! I will humbly offer up the incense of a grateful soul ! May it be accepted !

Write to me, dear Lady Ann, and believe me one of the most affectionate of friends, one of the most happy of human beings.

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET.

LETTER XV.

LADY ANN

TO

ELIZA.

Howard Castle.

JOY to you, my best beloved; my heart beats in unison with yours, and is most happy. Oh! may that pure offering be accepted at the Throne of Mercy, and the succeeding

E 3

hours

hours sweet as the present ! What a load of anxiety has your letter taken from my mind ! The fears I before endured upon your account, made me insensible to the surrounding gaiety ; and when every other countenance has glowed with delight, mine, responsive to my feelings, has borne every trace of sadness. I have been interrogated, rallied, and even reproached by turns ; but your dear epistle had more effect than all the rhetorick of my good friends, and I am now one of the gayest of the party, which, as I before mentioned to you, is numerous : Oh ! that you and your elegant Courtney were but added
to

to it! what a Happy mortal should I be. Our visitors are yet unknown to you, suffer me to introduce them. I first have the honour of presenting the venerable Lady Mary Mordaunt (who arrived here yesterday); her first appearance informs you, Nature intended her for the elevated station she fills, and which she is an honour to; her heart and hand are ever open to relieve suffering worth; she is a mother to the unfortunate, and a sorrowful heart seldom quitted her dwelling: Sanguine in her expectations, Lady Mary has sometimes met with severe disappointments, and her benovolence has been

repaid by ingratitude, yet, though she has felt for the depravity of human nature, that active charity she so eminently possesses, has never been suppressed. Are not you ready to exclaim? "This is a perfect character!" No, my Eliza, I am about to cast a shade over it, which darkens it's lustre; an unfortunate and most excessive share of that baneful passion, *pride of blood*, renders this otherwise admirable woman, cruel and unjust; to satisfy it, she is rendering, by her barbarous duplicity, her only child the most miserable of women. Cecilia Mordaunt is gentleness, is loveliness itself; sensibility

bility is her characteristic, too much so for her life ever to have been a very happy one ; surrounded by every felicity, the distresses of others would have cast a bitter in her cup : Judge then how acutely she must feel her own poignant anguish. About a year ago, Miss Mordaunt, with a party of other young people, went to view a large man of war, which anchored on the coast, near their seat. The Captain of the vessel being known to them, they accepted his pressing invitation of dining on board : During the repast, Miss Mordaunt missed from her side a favourite little spaniel, which was her con-

stant attendant ; she hastily quitted the company, and upon reaching the deck, distinctly heard the cries of the poor little animal ; she rushed forward, and beheld it clinging to a rope, which was suspended from the side of the ship, a sailor having kicked it overboard ; Miss Mordaunt supposed she could rescue her favourite from its painful and dangerous situation, but in attempting it, she reached beyond her ballance, and tumbled headlong into the sea ; several of the gentlemen had followed her, but none arrived in time to prevent the dreadful accident, and she would probably have perished, had not one of them

them boldly leaped in, seized her by the hair, and being an excellent swimmer, conveyed her to the boat, which was at no great distance: She soon recovered her senses, which her fright had deprived her of. Lady Mary was filled with gratitude for the preserver of her child, and pressed him with eagerness to prolong his stay at her seat; he consented without much difficulty, for the charms of Miss Mordaunt had inspired him with the deepest passion: the name of this youngman was Melcombe. His father had acquired an immense fortune by extreme industry; his origin being very obscure, he had, however, given to his son every advantage of

E 6 educa-

education, and Nature had been most prodigal of her favours. The grateful heart of Cecilia took a sensible pleasure in dwelling on his perfections; she thought her tenderness merely the effect of gratitude; she applauded herself for indulging it: Alas! she knew not she was involving herself in a labyrinth of misery, which once entered, she could never quit.

Lady Mary judged from the splendour of Mr. Melcombe's equipage, &c. that he was of quality, though she was utterly unacquainted with his connexions; she was indifferent with regard to fortune;

tune ; Miss Mordaunt's was large enough to supply every elegance of life, to gratify every wish ; but a noble descent was an indispensable requisite, and the elegant manners of Mr. Melcombe presaged to her willing imagination, that he possessed that advantage.

The now very visible partiality between him and Cecilia made her resolve to enquire very minutely into the history of their visitor. Chance furnished her with the means of becoming acquainted with every particular of it. Sir William Sandford came to pay her a visit ; he was ever esteemed

a worthy man, and particularly agreeable to Lady Mary, as his ideas exactly agreed with her favourite notions. The father of Mr. Melcombe was born on his estate, being son to one of the lowest of his peasants; Sir William, finding him industrious and intelligent, took upon himself the charge of his education, and provided him with that clerkship which was the foundation of his future good fortune. Guess, if you can, Lady Mary's feelings! The son of a poor peasant, the object of his master's bounty, whose wealth was acquired by traffic—to be the husband of *her Cecilia!* She, the heiress of immense
pos-

possessions, and descended from one of the most ancient and honourable Houses in Great Britain. The thought was agony; and Sir William Sandford added fuel to the flame. That Mr. Melcombe's love was returned by Miss Mor-daunt was too certain; every word, every action confirmed it. How to break off so disgraceful an attachment was the question. Mr. Melcombe soon paved the way for his dismissal, by making his proposals known to Lady Mary; his fortune was large, and his love rendered him blind to any obstacle. The consequence of this proposal was an immediate dismissal, without being per-
mitted

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

mitted to behold Cecilia before his departure: He wrote, but Lady Mary's servants were too much attached to their mistress to be corrupted; they delivered the letter into *her* hands, and she returned it unopened, adding a line or two, as if from her daughter, with some pointed sarcasms upon the presumption of his wishes, and the meanness of his origin. It produced such an answer as might be expected from a man, amiable as I have described Mr. Melcombe. *This* was suppressed, and a second forgery committed. Cecilia received a letter; the hand she *took* for Mr. Melcombe's, but how unlike were it's
con-

contents to the sentiments he had ever uttered ! It was a compound of vanity, meanness, and impertinence ; and Lady Ann extracted a vow from her, in the first bitterness of the moments that followed—never to speak to him, never to see him more. She has faithfully kept it, but her peace is fled ; silent distress preys upon her bloom, and her decay, though slow, is nearly certain. Do not you pity her, dear Eliza ? I do most sincerely. I wish I could relieve her, but the secret was confided to me by my mother, upon condition I should never reveal it to any but yourself, whose integrity she can rely upon.

Lady

Lady Mary stays not long, as Cecilia did not accompany her.

Mrs. Hume is the next who has the pleasure of an introduction: She is a young widow of large fortune, and one of the most lively creatures in the universe; her lovers are numerous, but she vows, that liberty is the greatest of all earthly blessings, and that the most accomplished of mortals could not compensate for the loss of it. She laughs and flirts indiscriminately with our beaux, but "*Le mariage est le tombeau de l'amour*" is her motto.

The

The next personage who advances towards you is Miss Granville, a compleat town belle, who *dies of the horrors* when a *party* for walking or reading is proposed, but *recovers* at the appearance of a card-table, or well-lighted ball-room. The country is her aversion, and she would expire of *ennui*, if the male-creatures did not render it in some degree supportable.

Nature formed her lovely : Affectation and Art have rendered her almost contemptible.

Perhaps you will say the picture is drawn by the hand of Envy,
parti-

particularly when I add, all her artillery of charms are levelled against Lord Salisbury. I do not, however, think her a dangerous rival. Rival! Oh, horrible! I am tacitly confessing myself a competitor for the honour of his approbation. I am tempted to erase it. Yet why should I blush to own to you my partiality for one so every way worthy of it, and whose pretensions are authorised by all my friends.

Mrs. Medway, and her three daughters, are quite in the common stile of rather agreeable people. Our beaux only remain to be presented, and I shall
pass

pass them but slightly over, as my epistle is extended to an uncommon length. Lord Monson very fine, and not *equally* amusing. Mr. Luttrell sensible and accomplished; his fortune is inadequate either to his merit, or disposition, but he is universally esteemed, and his society very much courted by all. Mr. Edwards and Mr. Morpeth, two pleasing young men, compose the motley groupe. I protest, I had forgot to add Lord Salisbury's name to the list, yet, though he holds the lowest place in my *epistle*, his station in my heart repays him for the neglect, with interest.

My

94 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

My very kind respects and congratulations I present to Lord St. Julian. Tell Courtnay I long to assure him personally of my esteem.

All joy attend you both !

Forget not her, who is, with unalterable affection, your faithfully devoted friend,

ANN HOWARD.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

DID not I tell you, my friend, that I was one of the happiest of human beings? And did not I contradict the assertion of those who maintain, "that *perfect* happiness is not the lot

lot of mortality?" Perhaps the contradiction was impious, and I am punished for it. Ah! Lady Ann, could you have supposed the destined bride of Courtnay blessed with the approving smiles of her parent, to be at this moment a prey to the most cruel anguish? Mysterious Powers! What am I to think of the scene which daily presents itself before me? My troubled imagination in vain seeks to develope the cause. Courtnay, my dear Lady Ann, is changed: No, not in his affection for *me*, yet he is changed: His soul is disturbed by some sudden, and I fear, some *fatal* circumstance; his brow is frequently clouded

clouded by anxiety; his cheek flushed with anger; nay, I have seen the tear of distress stand trembling in his manly eye. To me he is ever tenderly assiduous; yet in those moments when he has renewed to me his vows of affection, he has started, as from the touch of a torpedo, and quitted me with precipitation.

My father has some employments that occupy all his time; I am not sorry for it; the uneasiness of his favourite would distress him, and we have enough of sorrow, without the addition of his. I have wept over the fate of poor Miss Mordaunt, it is a piteous one; and the barbarity of

Lady Mary casts a cloud, dark as midnight, over all her other virtues. I have not spirits to thank you for your kindness as I ought; add to it by writing to me, and pour the lenient balm of friendship into my wounded mind.

My sweet friend, adieu,

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET.

LETTER XVII.

L A D Y A N N

T O

E L I Z A.

Howard Castle.

MY heart is as true to yours,
as the needle to the pole,
dear Eliza; and the transition of my
countenance from gaiety to sadness,
was most rapid upon the receipt
of your letter, which has filled

F 2

me

me with astonishment. The cause of this unaccountable change, is to me unfathomable ; but do not give way to such an excess of grief ; this storm once blown over, your happiness will be doubled by the comparison ; and it can, it *must* be but a transient one. I blame you, Eliza, for suffering your distress so silently ; apply to Courtney, entreat, nay, conjure him, by the love he bears you, to explain these wonders ; tell him your future happiness depends upon it ; if he is the Courtney I take him for, he will not hesitate one moment ; if he does, I discard him from my friendship ; he is unworthy

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY. 101

worthy of Eliza St. Julian. They wait for my letter, and I have scarce time to assure you of the unalterable attachment of your

ANN HOWARD.

F 3

LET-

LETTER XVIII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

YOUR kind and consolatory letter has been read a hundred times, dear Lady Ann ; how sweetly soothing is the voice of friendship ! yet at present, I confess with sorrow, I find it insufficient

ficient to calm my inquietude; I am, indeed, most wretched, tortured by suspense, dreading some impending evil, yet, ignorant of what nature it can be. My poor Courtney is an object of pity; his wan and dejected countenance betrays his inward emotions. Unperceived by him, I yesterday evening saw him seated in a pensive posture, in the most gloomy part of the wood; he seemed buried in thought, till starting on a sudden from the seat, he exclaimed—

“ By Heavens ! it is acting the part of a villain ; yet my

F 4

passion

passion urges me forward, and these scruples must be conquered!"

I heard no more, for he hastily retired, leaving me a prey to the most bitter anguish. A cold shivering seized me, I sunk to the ground, my strength, but not my reason, forsook me, and a thousand horrid ideas rushed into my mind; they were rejected to give place to others still more terrible; how long I should have thus continued to torment myself, I know not, had not the distant roll of thunder, and a faint gleam of lightning which flashed from the Heavens, warned me of the approaching storm; with difficulty

culty I raised myself from the earth, and bent my steps towards the house, but, as I moved but slowly, and the distance was above a mile, the storm increased with prodigious violence; the thunder seemed ready to burst on my devoted head; the flashes of lightning were incessant, till the rain, which now poured down in torrents, in some degree abated them. I was drenched in water, and scarcely able to support myself, when I saw Courtnay, followed by several of the servants, coming in search of me: He had been under terrible alarms about me, and my appearance did not tend to

lessen them; I was, indeed, so completely fatigued, that they were under a necessity of carrying me the remainder of the way. I hastened to my apartment, and pleaded a slight indisposition as an excuse for suffering Mr. Courtney to pass the evening by himself.

My father was engaged about some particular affairs, which required all his attention.

How I wish for you, my beloved friend; your superior wisdom might find the clue to unravel this dark mystery; I seek it in vain; all that I know is, that
I am

I am miserable. I will not continue to afflict you with my sorrows; to-morrow I am resolved to address myself to my father, to unbosom to him all my cares, and seek for advice and comfort in his paternal bosom.

In Continuation.

NOW am I a wretch indeed! The sun shines not upon one more miserable! Oh, Lady Ann! my
 F 6 heart

heart is nearly broken; in vain do I offer my supplications to Heaven for resignation to enable me to support my misfortune! It is, as yet, denied me! Judge if I have not cause for grief? When I arose this morning, after a sleepless night, pale, languid, and unrefreshed, I received a message from my father, commanding my immediate attendance; I obeyed the summons; I found him in his library, which he was traversing with hasty strides, his countenance was pale, and his whole frame visibly disordered; upon my entrance he came up to me, and seizing me by the arm, with his eyes fixed upon

upon my face, said, " Eliza, do you love your father?" " How wretched am I, that my beloved, my only parent, can imagine there is need for that question !" I replied. " If you really love your father," he said, "you will save him from destruction ; it is in your power, and if you refuse, Eliza, the curse of that father will be substituted in place of the blessing his fond and doating heart ever gave you."

" Oh, spare me, my honoured Sir !" I cried, " kneeling before you, I promise to do whatever you require of me ; to yield up my life for you, appears trifling,

110 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

fling, in comparison to your dreadful menace, which harrows up my very soul!" "You must yield up your lover," he said, "for know, the hated Percy, and now abhorred Courtnay are one. This letter informs me of his detestable duplicity, which, if I forgive, may all the bitter imprecations, with which I have loaded him, light with double vengeance upon me!" More he said, but he might long have continued his heart-rending discourse uninterrupted by your poor Eliza, who remained in that suppliant posture, and rendered immoveably fixed by astonishment, horror, and despair. My father

was

was enraged ; “ Base and unworthy girl,” he furiously exclaimed, “ dost thou hesitate ? Renounce then thy duty ; give thyself to that villain ; thou wilt put the finishing stroke to the work he and his family begun, and that child I have nurtured in the bosom of affection, will live to be my murderers. No ! added he, after a pause, “ They shall not thus triumph over me ; in this I will conquer or die : Retire to your chamber, Madam, it shall be your prison till your rebellious heart shall learn it’s duty.” Shocked by this dreadful scene, I had scarce the power of obeying, and he rather dragged, than led

112 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

led me to my chamber, from whence I address you. I hear the trampling of horses in the Court of the Castle: My woman enters; she tells me, the amiable stranger is gone: And do we then part for ever, O Percy? dear ill-fated object of my fondest affection, I shall never again behold thee! Cruel, unrelenting duty demands the sacrifice: I must endeavour to obey; yet my heart tells me, that till it ceases to beat, it must adore thee. I can write no more, dear Lady Ann. Adieu.

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER XIX.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

I Have not, for these two days, seen my father: How is he changed! *Once* he stiled me the joy of his existence, and my society his greatest blessing; but now I am become odious to him.

We

We are told, my dear friend, that it is our duty to submit patiently to misfortune; the theory is easy, but how difficult the practice. I call both reason and religion to my aid to enable me to bear my hard lot with fortitude, to forget the perfections of the most amiable of men, and to teach my wayward heart obedience; but it will not be, spite of myself, the name of Percy escapes me. His virtues rise to my remembrance, but in one action did he ever err. And what was the motive? Oh! Lady Ann, that motive will plead with me in his favour. From the windows of my apartment I behold that favourite spot, where so many hours
have

have sweetly passed in mutual professions of everlasting affection, in vows which are registered in Heaven, and which even the commands of a father will not permit me to renounce; but what do I say? Shall I, by persisting to indulge this fatal passion, involve the declining years of a parent in wretchedness; repay his former kindness with the blackest ingratitude; and, perhaps, hasten his journey to eternity? The thought is agony! Pity my struggles, my dear Lady Ann, they are almost too much for me. Oh! that you would hasten to me, but that wish is vain!

In

In Continuation.

I AM still a close prisoner, and a week has elapsed since that day of horror which I shudder but to think upon. My father has condescended to enquire after the health of his poor Eliza. I dispatched my woman with the following billet—

“IF my father knew the unhappy situation of my mind, I am too well convinced of his affection, to doubt of his affording
me

me the only consolation I am now capable of receiving ; I am impatient to obtain his pardon for my involuntary errors ; to be reinstated in his favour, and to be once more his beloved as well as dutiful

“ E L I Z A . ”

His

His answer is brought me.

“ I F you would be considered as that daughter I *once* fondly loved, adopt the sentiments I have commanded; on no other terms will I regard you, but as my bitterest enemy; you are no longer confined to your chamber; I will not even mention to you the name of that villain, who has poisoned the domestic happiness of

“ ST. JULIAN.”

I am

I am too impatient to avail myself of this permission, and again to see my father, to add more than that I am, your

ELIZA.

LET-

LETTER XX.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

BOTH your kind letters lay
before me. Best of friends,
what do I not owe to you! I will
endeavour to profit by your ad-
vice; your sweetly soothing
counsels, your friendship is my
only

only comfort. I fear the affection of my father will never be regained; he does not, indeed, chide me, but that unreserved confidence, that partial fondness once bestowed upon me, is entirely gone; the reception I met with was cold, and the effusions of an honest heart little regarded: No longer am I the companion of his walks; I am chiefly alone, too much so, Lady Ann, for by this means I am at liberty to indulge my reflections on a subject, which is fatal to my peace. Winter approaches; every thing wears the most gloomy aspect; I ramble in the woods, the withered leaves fall in showers

around me, while the bleak winds
whistle in hollow murmurs ;
amidst this solitude the name of
Percy escapes me—

“ Oh, name ! for ever sad, for ever dear,

“ Still breath'd in sighs, still usher'd with a
tear.”

May I venture to ask you to
inform me, whether he is yet in
England ? This enquiry surely
is not a crime ; if you think it
such, punish my offence by your
silence, and compleat the wretch-
edness of

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET.

LETTER XXI.

LADY ANN

TO

ELIZA.

Howard Castle.

H EAVEN forbid, my suffering friend, that *I* should add to your sorrows; if I could administer relief to them, I should be most happy: I fear the account I am about to give, will

G 2

have

124 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

have a *far* contrary effect; it is from Lord Salisbury I received it; he is just returned from London, where he heard the Earl had been detained by illness at one of his seats; that he was then returned to Court, though still indisposed, and much altered both in appearance and manner; that a settled melancholy seemed to have taken possession of him, but that he had petitioned his Majesty to employ him in the service of his country, and it was expected he would have the command of the forces the ensuing campaign, when they are to embark for France. Deserving as he is of every good, depend upon it he will be the peculiar

peculiar care of Providence. Do not despair, you may yet be happy; the prejudices of Lord St. Julian may be conquered. My mother tells me, the worthy Lord Raymond will use his utmost endeavours to remove them. That fresh offers of Royal favour will be made to him, let us hope the issue may be favourable.

Adieu,

ANN HOWARD.

G 3

LET-

126 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

LETTER XXII.

LORD ST. JULIAN

TO THE

MARQUIS OF LOTHIAN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

MY dear Marquis, am I never to be freed from persecution? I yesterday received a long and laboured production from Lord Raymond, (the man I once stiled my friend) setting forth

forth the happiness and honour
 I forfeit, by persisting in my re-
 solution of remaining in my re-
 tirement : Golden baits are thrown
 out to allure me from it ; un-
 bounded promises are made, (I
 despise them from my soul) ;
 and all that is required of me is,
 to reconcile myself to that villain,
 who is my curse ; to become the
 most abject thing in nature. No !
 let me sooner perish by the most
 cruel death human barbarity
 ever inflicted. I have returned
 Lord Raymond his letter, and I
 trust it will be the last with
 which he will trouble me. My
 daughter looks ill and melan-
 choly, but the cause of this
 G 4 sorrow

sorrow deprives her of my compassion ; yet she is all gentleness and sweetness, and I find the task of severity a hard one. From her softness and tractability, I have not a doubt of her compliance with my commands, with regard to you, and when she is your wife, the virtues of her principles, and strong sense of duty, will make her be every thing to you that you can wish ; I shall then once more taste tranquillity : Come, therefore, my dear Lord, you will be a most welcome guest to your sincere friend,

ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

WHAT an account! Percy
ill, unhappy to leave
England to command the army.
Oh! my weak heart, it sinks
under the weight of its sorrows
at these tidings. Yet why should
G 5 I repine?

130 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

I repine? he can be nothing to me; and though seas part us, nay, should death divide us, where will be the difference? Our fates can never be joined. Oh, fatal bar to all my earthly comfort! Unfortunate inflexibility! Dear Lady Ann, you endeavour to raise my hopes, but I too well know my father to dare to indulge them; he has been much disturbed of late; I rather think by letters from London, and is still as reserved to me as ever. I am summoned; a visitor is arrived.

* * *

A fresh

A fresh cause for sorrow ! It is the Marquis of Lothian, who I have before described to you, and who is one of the most unpleasing characters I ever met with. My father was absent when he arrived ; he affected to be much distressed by my altered appearance, and perplexed me by a thousand enquiries concerning the cause. Soon after my father entered, and received him with every mark of satisfaction ; the sight of this man seemed to give him a flow of vivacity which has long laid dormant. Never less disposed to be cheerful, I tried to appear so ; my father seemed pleased with

me, and treated me more kindly than usual. He left me with the Marquis for upwards of an hour: During our *tête à tête*, the conversation turned upon the dangerous situation my father had been relieved from by the gallant stranger; when, would you believe it? the injurious Marquis dared to insinuate that the noble, the generous Percy had been the contriver of the horrid plot; that the ruffians were his creatures, and had suffered him to gain an easy victory. Much more he would have added to this vile calumny, but my contempt and indignation at his meanness, threw me off my guard; I in-

I interrupted him by giving vent to those emotions he had raised, and, I fear, he but too plainly saw, that it was not only the hero, but the lover whom I defended. His pride was likewise piqued by some expressions that escaped me, and I saw the malice of his heart plainly depicted in his countenance; I repented my warmth, but it was too late. The return of my father put an end to our conversation, and I hope it may not be resumed.

My dear friend, you will grow weary of my melancholy letters;
indeed

134 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

indeed my sadness increases, instead of diminishing ; but I am, as much as ever,

Your affectionate

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET

LETTER XXIV.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

THE Marquis has passed a month with us; he his now gone, but, I understand, will return shortly; would to Heaven I might be permitted to visit you, dear Lady Ann; your society might

might alleviate my grief, and I should be more tranquil, when removed from this odious Marquis; he is, if possible, grown more hateful to me than ever; his heart is the repository of every malevolent sentiment; dissimulation, pride, avarice, and envy, are his ruling passions.

I wonder my father can be thus blind to his failings; but, alas! he is most compleatly so, and considers him as one of the best of men; he takes every opportunity to extol him to me, to ascribe to him every virtue, while that dear unfortunate (who, in reality, possesses what
the

the deluded fancy of my dear, though mistaken parent, sees the semblance of in the other) is branded with every opprobrious epithet. The forged account I told you of in my last, has gained ample credit, and I am compelled to the hard task of dissembling my feelings, as this is now my father's favourite topic. Judge how unpleasant my situation must be; it is, indeed, almost insupportable. My father has sent for me to accompany him in a walk, he has something to communicate to me; my heart forbodes some fresh uneasiness: Yet, what have I to apprehend? But a secret dread hangs

hangs upon my spirits; I will endeavour to shake it off. I shall not close this letter till to-morrow.

Adieu for the present.

In Continuation.

MY presentiments have proved true; I have received a bitter addition

addition to my misery; but I will not trouble you with my melancholy reflections, but proceed to inform you of my conversation with my father. I joined him in the garden; he received me with a kindness so unusual, that while it charmed, it surprised me; "I wish to converse with you, my child (he said) on a subject which nearly concerns us both, by complying with a request I am about to offer, where I have a right to command, you will recompense me for the many unhappy hours you have lately caused me; this request is in itself so reasonable, so likely to contribute to your own welfare, that

that you cannot offer the shadow of a reason for a refusal, which would overturn all my schemes of future contentment, and render the close of my life most wretched. The Marquis of Lothian loves you ; his family and fortune are noble ; but what weighs still more with me, is, his unbounded affection for you : I shall not enumerate his many good qualities ; you cannot be ignorant of them. Say, then, my Eliza, will you, by a chearful compliance with my will, entitle yourself to my future affection."

The tears streamed in torrents from my eyes, and my distress almost deprived me of the
power

power of answering him ; at last,
“ I conjured him not to press me
to a compliance, which I shud-
dered but to think on ; that my
repugnance to the Marquis was
too great ever to be conquered ;
that in no other instance would
I disoblige him ; that it should
be the study of my life to make
him happy, but nothing could
induce me to unite myself to a
man, who, in spite of every ef-
fort I could use, I must continue
to abhor.” I expected a dread-
ful storm of passion, but my
father condescended to reason
with me for a considerable time ;
every argument did he urge,
which he thought likely to
have

have weight with me, till finding that his pathetic discourse, though it gave me unutterable pangs, yet tended not to alter my resolution, he was enraged, and after severely upbraiding me with my want of duty, and uttering a thousand imprecations on one (still dearer to me than myself), he left me in anger; I dread the effects of it. The Marquis returns to-morrow, his presence will now be doubly hateful to me; no force or persuasion shall ever make me his wife.

Adieu, do not cease to love your

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER XXV.

LADY AUGUSTA PERCY

TO

MRS. HERBERT.

Portman Square.

I Wish it was possible to conquer your perverseness, dear Mrs. Herbert, and draw you from your retirement: What a charming addition would your society be to us. We arrived in town

town last night; we meant to have been here sooner, but we visited Stanley-Castle in our way, as it had been agreed Lady Helen should accompany us to spend the winter in London, and her brother detained us prisoners for a week. Never was there so joyous a confinement; his Lordship had surely studied for half a century to invent any thing so agreeable; it was a continued round of amusement, yet each day was so diversified, that our pleasures were never languid, or tinctured with the slightest *ennui*. I never could give myself the trouble of aiming at the descriptive, or I might send

send you a letter as long as one of Dr. R——'s sermons, filled with accounts of balls, rural fetes, masquerades, &c. but you know me too well to expect it: I will, however, try to give you the outlines of Lady Helen's picture, that you may guess what sort of companion she is likely to prove to me. With regard to person, she is neither very fat, or very thin; very short, or very tall; but the *tout ensemble* is passable: not so her face, which is almost disagreeable; and what is a thousand times worse, she fancies it lovely—at least her manner tells you so: Her disposition, I have heard, is naturally

VOL. I. H turally

turally serious, but she is resolved to be in every thing exactly the reverse of what Nature intended, and is, therefore, giddy and volatile to excess. She is, indeed, a strange creature, and I am apt to think the only proof she ever gave of her sense, is, the extreme fondness with which she honours your Augusta: She has discovered we are amazingly alike both in disposition and form. She has made me the offer of being her confidant, but as secrets are my aversion, I declined the intended favour. Do not, my dear Herbert, imagine, I have added a passion for satire to my other failings,

failings, or that my whole stock of good-nature has been left in the country as your companion; in the first place, you want not an addition to yours, nor will I part with one grain of mine; it is the most valuable treasure I can boast: No! believe me, I have sent you a faithful portrait of her Ladyship. Consider, my dear friend, she would have been *too rich*, if *Nature* had been as prodigal of her gifts, as *Fortune*; she will meet as it is, with admirers sufficient to content her; *ninety thousand pounds* will cover a multitude of defects.

Lord Stanley has hinted to my mother, that an alliance between my brother and Lady Helen, would be very agreeable to him, and her answer was such as he wished; but, I am convinced, they may as well spare themselves the trouble of forming such projects: Lady Helen has no more chance of obtaining the hand of *Percy*, than I have of gaining that of the Grand Monarque: You know him, therefore I need not dwell upon his virtues; indeed, it is not the partial eyes of his fond sister alone, that they are visible; every tongue is prodigal of his praise, yet he is not happy;
a settled

a settled melancholy consumes him : How is he changed within these few months ! His altered appearance distresses us greatly, he was rejoiced to see us, but at the first glance I discovered all was not well within ; I ventured to hint a desire of knowing the cause, he pleaded ill-health, and changed the subject in a manner expressive of the pain the renewal of it would give him ; this has silenced me effectually. I find he has solicited permission to raise a regiment, which has been most graciously granted : These preparations for the approaching war freeze my very soul. Oh ! my

H 3

dear

dear Mrs. Herbert, what miseries will this thirst of power give rise to ! How many distracted widows, and sorrowful orphans will it cause ! Yet, we are told, it is a necessary evil ; but let me drop this mournful subject, which ill agrees with my usual gaiety ; but this dear brother has made me almost as wretched as himself. Lady Helen is at the door of my apartment, I must admit her ; she is raving herself nearly out of breath ; Percy is her subject. I find she is not unacquainted with her brother's conversation with the Countess ; she is teasing me to death ; I must put an end to my letter, though
much

much against my inclination, for never am I more agreeably employed than in conversing with my dear Mrs. Herbert, who, I hope, is convinced of the affection of her

AUGUSTA PERCY.

H 4

LET-

152 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

LETTER XXVI.

LADY AUGUSTA PERCY

TO

MRS. HERBERT.

Portman Square.

I AM just returned from visiting Lady Ann Howard. Percy has made it fashionable to be melancholy, I think: The countenance of this amiable woman

man is overspread with sadness, though I found her surrounded by the most brilliant of both sexes: Lord Salisbury was with her, (if fame says true) he is become a vassal to her beauty; he is worthy of her, as I hardly know a more accomplished Nobleman.

I was accompanied by my brother and Lady Helen; I introduced the latter to Lady Ann; I find the world have already marked her for my sister elect; her partiality is sufficiently visible to all, but it's object, who is too absent and indifferent to observe it, and pays her no more attention

[H 5

than

than her rank and relationship to our family demands. I cannot help considering her as deserving of my pity, though I do not believe her possessed of stability enough to feel any deep regret, when she finds (as she very soon will) that her air built schemes are never likely to be realized: She has got three or four dangles already in her train, but they are unworthy of being made known to you.

We are all going to-morrow to a ball given by Lady Salisbury; I believe, it is merely out of compliment to her son's fair mistress.

Lady

Lady Helen has been telling Percy, she intends to honour him with her hand. I have laughed most heartily at the whimsical conversation, which was order reversed—the lady most pressing, the gentleman very coy; but she has conquered; and has laughed, scolded, in short, plagued him out of his objections; and the weighty affair is settled to her satisfaction.

I am to have the honour of directing her toilet; so she has found employment for us both.

H 6

I am

than her rank and relationship to our family demands. I cannot help considering her as deserving of my pity, though I do not believe her possessed of stability enough to feel any deep regret, when she finds (as she very soon will) that her air built schemes are never likely to be realized: She has got three or four dangles already in her train, but they are unworthy of being made known to you.

We are all going to-morrow to a ball given by Lady Salisbury; I believe, it is merely out of compliment to her son's fair mistress.

Lady

Lady Helen has been telling Percy, she intends to honour him with her hand. I have laughed most heartily at the whimsical conversation, which was order reversed—the lady most pressing, the gentleman very coy; but she has conquered; and has laughed, scolded, in short, plagued him out of his objections; and the weighty affair is settled to her satisfaction.

I am to have the honour of directing her toilet; so she has found employment for us both.

H 6

I am

156 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

I am tired of writing, as you
will be a thousand times more of
reading this stupid nonsense.

I am, as much as ever,

Your

AUGUSTA PERCY.

LET-

LETTER XXVII.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

WEEKS pass away in the same uninteresting manner; the journal of one day might serve for the whole, till this morning, when my father came to

to me ; a cruel joy sparkled in his countenance ; he held a letter in his hand—

“ Eliza,” he cried, “ I am come to condole with you on the desertion of your lover ; he has already forgot his vows, and is upon the point of marriage with a Lady of high rank and fortune : He has set you a good example, follow it, and shew him that Eliza St. Julian can command a husband highly his superior ; let him not triumph in your weakness and despair : The worthy Marquis is more pressing than ever ;

ever; shall I tell him you are less inflexible?"

"It would be a poor compliment either to yourself or him," I replied, "if pique or disappointed passion engaged me to an act, which the commands of a parent, and importunities of a lover demanded in vain. No! my Lord, I am more determined than ever. I have long been convinced of the impossibility of an union between myself and the Earl of Northumberland: The event you speak of will have no weight with me."

Base

“Base and degenerate girl!” cried my father, “Unworthy of thy noble race of ancestors: By Heaven! I will renounce the pleasure I had promised myself in your society during my earthly pilgrimage. I will shut you up for life in a monastery; there you may repent your obstinacy at leisure, and sigh in vain for the pleasures which now court your acceptance, and which you ungratefully despise.” So saying, he left me.

I cannot help accusing the Marquis as the inventor of the account of this expected alliance.

The

The affection of Percy was too sincere for the absence of a few months to erase; and I know his noble soul would disdain to offer to any one his hand, unaccompanied by his heart: But should I even judge too favourably of him, how vain these threats, my friend! What is the world to me, that I should repine at for ever quitting it? My hopes of happiness have for some time been blasted, and I have nothing to look forward to, but a happy eternity! Such a retreat as I am threatned with, appears to me a comfort.

“How

162 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

- “ How happy is the blameless vestal's lot ;
“ The world forgetting, by the world
forgot ;
“ Eternal sun-shine of the spotless mind,
“ Each prayer accepted, and each wish
resign'd.
“ Labour and rest, that equal periods keep,
“ Obedient slumbers that can wake and
weep ;
“ Desires compos'd, affections ever even,
“ Tears that delight, and sighs that waft to
Heav'n.”

My mind is tranquil and serene ;
a letter is brought me, it is from
my friend ; I open it with delight.
Oh ! Lady Ann, I boasted too
much of my tranquillity ; and is
it, indeed, true, that the faithless

Percy

Percy has so soon forgot me?
Where is sincerity and constancy
to be met with; when he who
appeared so eminently to possess
them, as well as every other virtue,
has proved so deficient in
both?

Percy, I will tear thy loved
image from my heart, or perish
in the attempt! I will forget
every perfection my fancy has
dwelt upon with such delight!
But never will I follow the cruel
example thou art about to give
me! Never will I falsify those
vows I have made to thee, by
uniting myself with another!
to

164 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

to Heaven alone will I offer
them ; oh ! may they be accepted !

Lady Ann, I can write no
more.

Adieu,

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

L A D Y A N N

T O

E L I Z A.

St. James's Square.

I Hastily take my pen to entreat
you to write to me ; a whole
month has elapsed since your last
mournful letter. Good God !
what can occasion it ? If you are
ill,

ill, I will fly to you with all the eagerness of the truest friendship: This suspense is more than I can bear; write then I conjure you.

Percy is gone with the army; he is not married; but fame says, the nuptials are to be consummated upon his return. Once more I beg you will relieve from this dreadful state of anxiety,

Your own

ANN HOWARD.

LET-

LETTER XXIX.

ELIZA

TO

LADY ANN.

St. Julian's Abbey.

BEFORE this reaches you,
I shall be the wife of the
Marquis of Lothian! Yes, my
dear friend, he will, to-morrow,
receive the hand he has so long
fighed

fighed for ; would it were accompanied by my heart ! but, alas ! our affections are not always at our command ; they are involuntary ; and the voice of reason often pleads in vain. What a surprise this marriage will be to you ; my last letter assured you, it never would be ; but how vain are human resolves : I am a voluntary victim. Sure Heaven will approve, and in its own good time, *reward* the sacrifice I am about to make to filial affection ; yet my struggles have been great ; but this is, as yet, a mystery to you ; let me hasten to explain it.

About

About a week ago I was surprised by the great alteration in the appearance of my father; he was the very image of despair; frequently were his eyes cast upon me, with such a mournful tenderness, that I was affected beyond measure; longing, yet not daring to enquire the cause of his apparent sorrow, I remained some days in a state of dismal suspense: But, oh! what a blissful state was that, in comparison to the one I exchanged it for! My father sent for me one morning—

“ Eliza, (he said) we must prepare to quit the Abbey. No
 VOL. I. I longer

longer must your unfortunate father expect a shelter here ; this Castle and demesne will soon become the property of another. I am ruined ! for ever ruined ! my child ; and Heaven knows that 'tis for thee I feel more than for myself. My miseries will soon be ended : At this late period of life human nature cannot long support these agonies ; and to leave thy helpless beauty unprotected, exposed to all dangers, and every species of misfortune—these ideas will destroy the serenity which I once hoped would have attended upon my last moments ! Oh, Eliza ! (he

continued) it is in your power, and your's alone to give returning health and peace to the soul of an unhappy parent almost sinking under the load of his miseries—to ensure comfort to yourself—to have the power of dispensing it to thousands. How can the active charity of my Eliza bear to be restrained by the griping hand of poverty? To view the piercing distresses of the objects of her present bounty, and be equally unable to relieve theirs and her own! Do not be deaf to the voice of the tenderest of friends of a father: who would freely spill the last

drop of that blood, which still warms his enfeebled frame, to ensure your felicity, and who, even upon his aged knees, entreats his daughter to be kind to herself, and accept the proposals of the Marquis !”

At that dreadful moment (Oh, Lady Ann ! do I live to write it) I beheld my venerable parent kneeling before his wretched Eliza : I uttered a cry of horror ; I threw myself in his arms ; his face was wetted by my tears.

“ Oh, my father ! (I exclaimed) you have conquered ; dispose
of

of me as you please ; my own happiness is fled for ever ; but to ensure your's, I will follow the Marquis to the altar ; I will devote myself to wretchedness, nor shall one murmur escape me ; say but that you are contented, that you are satisfied with this mark of my obedience, and I shall die in peace."

"Talk not of dying, my exalted Eliza, (interrupted he) live to bless me ; to receive from me, daily proofs of the most lively gratitude : You have doubly repaid me for all my sorrows, and may Heaven shower down its choicest favours upon your head."

The Marquis entered, and prevented my reply. I will not repeat his transports at his good fortune, as he termed it; they urged me to consent to an early day; I was passive, and only entreated permission to retire; when alone in my apartment, I gave a free vent to my sorrow; I abandoned myself to the despair which overwhelmed me.

“ Oh, Percy ! (I exclaimed) now must I relinquish thy dear idea for ever ! It soon will be criminal ever to think of thee ! The Marchioness of Lothian dares not even breathe one wish
in

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY. 175

in which thou art concerned!
Oh, cruel destiny! unfortunate
Eliza!

These were my melancholy
soliloquies; and after a day spent
in tears and lamentations, I
threw myself on my bed, but
sleep refused to visit me.

“ The wretched he forsakes,

“ Swift on his downy pinions flies from
woe,

“ And lights on lids unsullied with a
tear.”

The morning dawned, but gave
no cheering comfort to me: how-

ever I arose ; the sky was mild and serene, and I set out on my accustomed walk, in hopes that the air and exercise might help to remove the traces of grief which marked my countenance, and which might offend my father and the Marquis. I had not proceeded far, when I was met by the latter ; he looked so happy, and was so kindly assiduous in forming plan for the future comfort and convenience of my father, that I reproached myself for ingratitude, and endeavoured to persuade myself I had been unjust in my premature judgment of his character ; but my heart refused

refused to obey the dictates of reason ; and indifference, nay, aversion remained in spite of my endeavours to remove them. Thus have I given you my sad history, my beloved friend ; inclosed in the packet you will find a picture presented to me in happier days ; I *then* fondly declared, I would never part with the dear resemblance of the most lovely of mankind ; but cruel necessity forbids me to retain it. Alas ! Lady Ann, I must also entreat the beloved name of Percy may never more be mentioned to me ; I must endeavour to forget it. Hard task !

I 5

I take

I take a last look at those expressive features; the portrait is blotted with my tears! You would mingle your's with mine, did you behold the struggles of my soul; but I will call reason, duty, and religion to my aid; I will conquer this deep rooted passion, I will prove myself worthy of your friendship; gratitude and rectitude of principle shall supply the place of love to the Marquis; and the consciousness of having acted well, shall reward me for the agonizing pangs that now rend the soul of your unfortunate

ELIZA ST. JULIAN.

LET-

LETTER XXX.

LADY AUGUSTA PERCY

TO

MRS. HERBERT.

Portman Square.

MY brother has left England ;
he is gone in pursuit of
glory. Oh, may he return co-
vered with laurels ! How melan-
choly - was our parting ! The

Countess and I wept, and conjured him to be careful of a life so deservedly dear to us. He soothed us with his accustomed kindness, and promised to obey our command; but I know the intrepidity of Percy, his total disregard of personal safety, where his King and country are concerned, fill me with such apprehensions, that should I lose him, happiness would be fled for ever. But I will not humour such dreadful ideas; Heaven will watch over its noblest work, and restore him in safety to his fond mother, and affectionate sister.

You

You will, perhaps, ask, how Lady Helen bears this separation? With becoming fortitude: And I believe her Ladyship is now perfectly convinced she has no chance of obtaining a nearer interest in the heart of Percy. Sir William Musgrave seems willing to console her for the disappointment, and she will not, I dare venture to affirm, be ungrateful. He is handsome, lively, and insinuating; his fortune was a good one, but a turn for expence, and propensity to gaming, have considerably reduced it.

We leave town in the course of six weeks, and pass a month

at Stanley Castle, from whence we proceed to Sir Robert Enfield's, where our stay is uncertain; so that it will be an age e'er I shall see you.

Why will you not come to me; or at least condescend to favour me with the motives which induce you to refuse my reiterated request? Surely the events of your life must have been most melancholy to render you insensible to the charms of society, and those pleasures which most women (particularly those young and beautiful like yourself) delight in; perhaps I may one day appear
worthy

worthy your confidence, so I will endeavour to suspend my curiosity.

I am persecuted by the addresses of the Duke of Buckingham. This nobleman, famed for the charms of wit and politeness, is insupportable to me as a lover; I have told him so a thousand times, but his vanity leads him to doubt the truth of my assertion; he thinks himself irresistible at sixty; and because I am indifferent to the sex, and continue to refuse the proposals I am frequently honoured with, he persists in the pursuit.

I think I shall never marry; my heart has hitherto been insensible
to

481 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

to love, but it glows with the most lively friendship for my dear Matilda, which will be as lasting as the life of her.

AUGUSTA PERCY.

LET-

LETTER XXXI.

THE MARCHIONESS OF LOTHIAN

TO

LADY ANN HOWARD.

Haldamore Castle.

WE staid but a fortnight at the Abbey, after the solemnization of our marriage, my dear friend ; it will still be the residence of my father ; but he has been pre-

186 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

prevailed upon to pass some months with us, which you will readily believe is truly pleasing to me; his health and spirits are charmingly good; I will say nothing of my own, I endeavour to be tranquil and contented; time may do much for me; I do not greatly admire our residence.

The Castle is a noble building, but has a gloominess in its appearance, that is not pleasing; it is surrounded by woods, and there is a fine lake, which empties itself in a canal that runs through the grounds, and forms a beautiful cascade.

The

The Marquis has an aunt who resides about ten miles distance from the Castle ; she was married when young, to Lord Kildare, who died a few years after their marriage : she has remained a widow ever since ; she is upwards of sixty ; rather unpleasing in her person ; her disposition remarkably grave, and her manners haughty ; her son, who resides with her, is the reverse in every thing : I greatly admire this young Nobleman ; he is not only very handsome, but sensible, and highly accomplished ; he has honoured me with his esteem, and is a frequent visitor at the Castle.

I do

I do not think he is a favourite with the Marquis, who often treats him with coldness, and appears displeased with the little attentions which his agreeable manners, joined to the relationship he bears us, demands from me. I would not be too quick sighted to the failings of the man destined for my partner through life; but I cannot help remarking the disposition of my husband is strongly tinged with that most baneful of all passions, jealousy: Little does he know me, if he can harbour a thought injurious to my honour; Heaven can witness for the purity of my soul; and the
strong

strong sense I have of the obligations that bind me to him.

I have a very fine harpsichord which the Marquis has lately purchased : You know my fondness for music. Lord Kildare is an enthusiast in that art, and plays the violin with great execution and taste ; he often accompanies me on that instrument. The other morning we passed several hours in this agreeable way : My father and the Marquis had been riding, and upon their return, found us employed in this manner ; we were in the middle of one of Handel's beautiful concertos, and

I was

I was so deeply engaged, that I did not attend to the Marquis, who, I imagine, had spoken to me upon entering; this enraged him so greatly, that striking the strings of the instrument with great violence, he broke nearly half of them, and by so doing, effectually prevented us from proceeding. Lord Kildare seemed shocked at his behaviour; my tears were ready to flow, but I restrained them, and rallied him upon the mischief he had done, which I affected to think undesigned: He was extremely fullen, and scarcely vouchsafed me an answer; indeed, for the remainder

mainder of the day his behaviour was most unaccountable.

Lord Kildare left us before dinner, and I was not sorry for his departure, as I felt myself unwilling to have a witness of the Marquis's unpleasing temper. My father looked unhappy, and I was compleatly so; however, he recovered his good humour the next day, and we are now all harmony.

May I expect the felicity of a visit from you this summer? Do, my dear Lady Ann, comply with this request; I have fixed my heart upon it; and I have the
vanity

192 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

vanity to believe it will make you
happy to give pleasure to your
faithful and affectionate

ELIZA LOTHIAN.

LET-

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY. 193

LETTER XXXII.

MRS. HERBERT

TO

LADY AUGUSTA PERCY.

Ann Grove.

I Should be most unpardonable,
my dear Lady Augusta, after
being honoured with your friend-
ship, and with the attention and es-
teem of your respectable mother, did

VOL. I.

K

I with-

I with-hold from you the account of whatever relates to me, after you have done me the honour of signifying a wish to be informed of it: You can never be more worthy of my confidence; it is a trust I should long since have troubled you with, but the fear of giving pain to one of the most benevolent hearts in the world; and the reluctance, I confess, I felt at again tearing open the wound which time is beginning to close, prevented me; but your last letter has made me resolve no longer to conceal the events of my unfortunate life.

My

My parents died when I was too young to be sensible of the loss I sustained ; they left me possessed of immense wealth, under the guardianship of a worthy man, Sir J. Sanby ; he, being a widower, judged it improper I should reside under his roof ; I was, therefore, sent to receive my education in a Convent : At the age of seventeen I returned to England, and my guardian being then married to a very amiable woman, his house was fixed upon for my abode ; I was introduced at Court, and my person not being contemptible, joined to my very large fortune,

procured me many admirers ; I was indifferent to all, till I became acquainted with Mr. Herbert, who returned from his travels about a year after my removal to my guardians : He was third son to the late Lord Herbert, and the beauties of his person could only be equalled by those of his mind ; his greatest, nay, indeed, his only fault, was a warmth of temper, which sometimes hurried him into indiscretions, but he was ever ready to acknowledge his errors, and atone for them to the utmost of his power ; though his fortune was far inferior to mine, yet his many virtues

virtues induced my guardian to overlook the disparity, and we were soon after married to the entire satisfaction of his family, who paid me every possible attention: For two years, I was the happiest of women. We were passing the summer at a seat he had in the North of England, when the Marquis of Lothian paid my husband a visit; they had long been acquainted, and had kept up a constant correspondence, though it was many years since they had met: My dear Charles was rejoiced to see him, and pressed him to make his visit as long as he could with conve-

nience ; I exerted myself to render the country agreeable to him ; unfortunately I succeeded too well, he grew enamoured of me, and treacherously broke the rules of friendship and hospitality, by daring to attempt to seduce the affections of the wife of that man whom he professed to esteem above all the world.

I cannot describe to you the grief and danger this insult upon my virtue raised in me ; I used every argument I was mistress of to shew him the villainy of his proceedings, I even declared I should inform my husband of
every

every circumstance but the artful dissembler, counterfeited so sincere a repentance of his fault, which, joined to my knowledge of Mr. Herbert's hasty disposition, determined me to endeavour to bury this offence in oblivion. For some time, all was peace, till I observed a very surprising alteration in the behaviour of my Charles; no longer was he the kind and affectionate husband, attentive to every wish I could form, he grew thoughtful, silent, and unhappy; I often enquired the cause, but his replies were vague, and unsatisfactory. One morning he told me, business required his presence

in town, he should be absent about a week, and that the Marquis would endeavour to amuse me till his return ; grieved at the idea of his absence, and much distressed at the thoughts of being left alone with the man who had proved himself so dangerous a companion, I asked if I might not be permitted to accompany him, but upon his telling me it was impossible, I ventured to hint my dislike of being left with the Marquis, and a wish that he would make him his companion to London : This he refused in a manner which shewed me he was evidently displeased with my

re-

request ; indeed he treated me with a harshness so entirely unusual, that I retired in tears to my apartment, and while I remained there, overwhelmed with grief for having unintentionally offended him, he set off, leaving me a prey to the extremest sorrow.

The Marquis used all his endeavours to raise my spirits, but the many injurious hints he threw out concerning the conduct of my beloved husband, tended to increase, instead of removing my grief ; he even dared to tell me, that the business which called him to London, was a mistress, whom he

had long and fondly loved, and that he had confessed to him, that his sole motive for marrying *me*, was, that my fortune might enable him to support this woman in a splendor suitable to his love. The false Marquis painted in strong colours my pretended injuries, urging me to bestow upon him an affection it should ever be his pride to merit, and that his secrecy should be equal to his passion.

I had not patience sufficient to suffer him to proceed, but he would be heard; finding his proposals excited in me the horror
they

they merited, he strove to terrify me to a compliance with his vile wishes, by threatening to blast that fair fame which had hitherto remained unfullied, and represent me in a manner to my husband, so as to give him a pretence to break with me, which, he declared, was the first wish of his heart. I despised his threats as much as his entreaties, and persisted in my resolution of remaining in my apartment till the return of Mr. Herbert.

About four days had elapsed since his departure, when one evening finding myself oppressed

with a dreadful head-ach, attended with a slight fever, I ordered my woman to prepare me some whey; I thought the taste had something peculiarly disagreeable in it, so much so, that I took but about half the quantity she brought me, and I soon after fell into a profound sleep: I was awakened by the noise of some one moving in my apartment; but guess my astonishment and terror upon beholding Froment, the favourite valet of the Marquis, half undressed, who approached my bed; at that moment my husband entered my chamber,

chamber; his sword was in his hand—

“ Infamous villain (he cried) receive the just reward of thy execrable crime !”

The man endeavoured to escape, but my husband perceiving his intention, rushed upon him with fury, and plunged the sword in his body; he was about to repeat the blow, but Froment cried out—

“ Spare my life, your wife is innocent; give me but life, and I will confess every thing.”

“ What

“What hast thou to confess, thou wretch, (cried Mr. Herbert); am I not already acquainted with thy monstrous villainy?”

“By the Great God of Heaven (said Froment) your Lady is innocent, 'tis the Marquis alone who merits your resentment; read that bond, (pulling a paper from his bosom) it is a promise of a thousand pounds from him for the part I have acted; I was to have escaped, and left that innocent victim, on whom it was expected you would have satisfied your revenge. The Marquis has long loved her; her virtue repulsed his addresses

addresses with scorn; he vowed vengeance, and her maid joined in the plot to deceive you; she administered opium to her mistress, and I was concealed in the closet, from whence, I, a moment ago, entered the chamber: A chaise and four waits at the gate to convey me hence."

My poor Charles fell upon his knees at the side of my bed, where I lay in a state of undescrivable horror.

"Can my much injured wife condescend to regard the unhappy wretch, who dared even for a moment

moment to suspect her matchless truth !”

I held out my hand to him ; he fondly embraced me, and wetting my face with his tears—

“ I leave you for a moment, my dear Matilda, (he said) I will return, and, by the most sincere repentance, endeavour to atone for my past errors.”

Foreseeing his dreadful intention, I endeavoured to detain him, but my strength failed, and I fainted : Happy had it been for me, had I never recovered from that lethargy !

thargy! The horrid scene that awaited me, fills me at this moment with horror; my hand trembles while I write, that my poor deluded Charles was mortally wounded by the vile Marquis, who departed with precipitation after putting the finishing stroke to his wickedness.

My unfortunate husband lived but two days, which he spent in imploring my pardon for his too easy credulity, and in offering up his prayers to that Benignant Power, whose mercy is equal to his justice, to receive
his

his departing soul, and blot out his transgressions!

He died in my arms; and with him all my earthly happiness.

Do you now continue to wonder at the melancholy with which I am oppressed, and my resolution to devote my remaining years to solitude? The pleasures of the great world have no longer any charms for me; but your friendship, and that of the Countess, will ever be ranked among the highest of my present blessings: I will endeavour
to

to merit its continuance. My
most tender respects attend you
both, as I am, and ever shall
be,

Dear Augusta,

Your truly affectionate

MATILDA HERBERT.

I had almost forgot to inform
you, that my dear Herbert made
it his last request, that his base
antagonist

antagonist might not be brought to justice; declaring, the stings of his conscience would one day be a sufficient punishment. Froment recovered from his wound and rejoined his wicked associate.

LET.

LETTER XXXIII.

LADY AUGUSTA PERCY

TO

MRS. HERBERT.

Enfield Hall.

I HAVE shed a thousand tears
over your sad recital, my dear
friend : What a villain is the Mar-
quis of Lothian ! Sincerely do I
commiserate the unhappy fate of
Mr.

Mr. Herbert; what a lesson of caution does your history convey; and I never moralized half so much during my life, as I have done since I received your letter. When I frequently rallied you for a gravity so uncommon at your early period of life, little did I think you had such real cause for melancholy. Can you pardon my ill-timed pleasantry? My mother interrupts me; she brings me a letter from Percy, and I am too impatient to hear of the situation of that beloved brother, to add another line, till my anxious curiosity is satisfied.

In

In Continuation.

PERCY is now well, and I am happy; though I yet shudder at the idea of the perils he has been in during the last engagement, (the news of its glorious success has doubtless reached you) my brother was wounded, though not deeply, yet the effusion of blood was great, and the sight of it increased, if possible, his courage;

courage; he fought like a lion, and dealt destruction among his foes, till, overpowered by numbers, his life was in the greatest danger; his horse was killed under him, and he had fallen to the ground, when an officer rushed forward to his assistance.—

“ Brave Percy (he exclaimed) I will save thee or perish.”

My brother heard no more, he fainted through loss of blood, and upon recovering, found himself in his tent supported by his gallant deliverer. You know the grateful heart of Percy, and will readily

readily believe he was not wanting in acknowledgements; but Lord Glendore (for so is he named) refused to hear them, assuring him the honour of his future friendship would far overpay him the service he had rendered. The entrance of the surgeons interrupted their conversation; they examined my brother's wounds, they declared them dangerous, and ordered him to be kept quiet, as they were apprehensive of a fever: Their fears were justly founded, and before the end of the next day his situation was most alarming; but the kind attention he met with,

joined to the strength of his constitution, effected his recovery, and at the end of three weeks he was so much restored as to be able to quit his tent: Nothing could exceed the joy of Lord Glendore, who had attended him with unremitting assiduity during his confinement. Percy is lavish in his praises of this worthy officer, who, he says, has, joined to all the fire of youth, a solidity of judgment seldom to be met with even in those men, who, advanced in years, have made it the study of their lives to acquire knowledge: He is as virtuous as he is brave, and as pleasing as he is

is virtuous; in short, he is one of the noblest and most amiable of characters.

What a fine picture, my dear Matilda! If the original is but half so valuable, he must be a glorious creature.

I call for your congratulations on the recovery of my dear brother: Heaven grant him to us in safety! The Countess joins her fervent prayers with mine. The dear Percy assures me, he will be careful of his health.

L 2

My

My Augusta (he says) do not let your solicitude and apprehensions of my safety, rob you of that vivacity which has ever been the delight of your friends. With what joy shall I embrace you when my duty to my King and Country permits my return. I look forward to that happy period of beholding you united to some worthy man sensible of your worth, enriched with your affection; and may no cruel disappointment blast your prospects of happiness, and mark your future days with anguish.

My dear Mrs. Herbert, the
kind wishes of my affectionate
Percy

Percy have robbed me of many tears. His stile has an air of melancholy, and seems to indicate that he is a victim to those misfortunes which he hopes I may never experience. Tell me if your opinion is the same? And upon his return, let us endeavour to develop this mystery.

We are now at Sir Robert Enfields; we stay but a week longer, and then return to the park, where I shall again enjoy your agreeable society.

The Countess offers you her kindest wishes; she will en-

L 3

deavour

222 ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY.

deavour with me, to obliterate
from your mind the remembrance
of past griefs.

Adieu, my dear Matilda,

AUGUSTA PERCY.

LET-

LETTER XXXIV.

THE MARCHIONESS OF LOTHIAN

TO

LADY ANN HOWARD.

Haldamore Castle.

HOW I lament your absence,
my amiable friend! Your
company enabled me to bear,
without repining, the strange hu-
mour of the Marquis; nay, I
L 4 think,

think, even his ungentle nature was softened by the sweetness of your manners, and charms of your conversation.

Since your departure he has resumed his harshness, and is sometimes almost insupportable; but I endeavour to bear every thing with patience.

Lord Kildare sent me a few days ago a couple of beautiful Canary Birds, and I was much pleased with the present; their charming warblings amused me; I placed them in my dressing-room, and fed them with great care:

My

My husband saw me so employed several times, and graciously condescended to laugh at my foolishness, as he termed it: He did not enquire how I procured my little favourites; and from a dread of offending him, I forbore to mention they were the gift of Lord Kildare.

This morning I was visited by Miss Sanby, who you may recollect seeing with Lady Kildare: She is a lively agreeable woman, and the Marquis always appears pleased with her conversation; he therefore handed her from

the carriage, and attended her to my dressing-room.

I was working at my embroidery when she entered, and she ran on in her usual way, praising my performance, till the warblings of my little favourites engaged her attention; she turned to observe them, and then said to me—

“ I am almost tempted to quarrel with your Ladyship for being so handsome, and with the Marquis for bringing such a fascinating creature, whose superior attractions make us poor spinsters
appear

appear so insignificant, that the
 beaus regard us no more than if
 we were their grand-mothers :
 Now I will give you a proof,
 though I vow it mortifies me to
 repeat it—

“ I was passionately fond of these
 two Canary Birds ; I entreated
 Lord Kildare to give them to me ;
 his answer was a refusal ; the man
 said something civil to excuse him-
 self, I own ; yet still he refused
 my request ; and, behold, here
 they are in the possession of the
 Marchioness ! who, I dare affirm,

L. 6

never

never gave herself the trouble even to ask for them."

My husband's angry countenance terrified me, his looks seemed to reproach me, as if I had been guilty of a crime in receiving this little present from Lord Kildare.

"No other man in the world could have been so blind to your charms, dear Miss Sanby, (said the Marquis); suffer me to repair, in some degree, the injury offered you, by entreating you will accept from my hands these little creatures; were they endued with
reason

reason, and were their sentiments like mine, with what joy would they quit their present mistress, for your superior loveliness !”

The Lady rallied him with great vivacity for his gallantry, and they kept up a spirited conversation for some time ; she, however, persisted in her refusal of his proffered civility, upon which he told her—

“ That since she would not permit them to live *with* her, they should die *for* her, as he would willingly do.”

And

And smiling maliciously at me, he strangled the innocent causes of his ill-nature, and threw them dead at her feet. She screamed, declared she was frightened at his cruelty, and hastily bidding me adieu, left the apartment; my husband followed to make his peace; and I withdrew before his return, to escape a torrent of undeserved reproaches.

I see my father returning from a walk in the woods, I will join him, and flatter myself his presence will restrain the passionate sallies of the impatient Marquis.

I shall

ST. JULIAN'S ABBEY. 231

I shall write to you again very shortly ; it is the greatest pleasure, I at present experience, next to your agreeable letters, which are ever, dear Lady Ann, most welcome to your

ELIZA LOTHIAN.

LET.

LETTER XXXV.

LADY ANN HOWARD

TO THE

MARCHIONESS OF LOTHIAN.

Howard Castle.

I Will not attempt to describe the sorrow I experience on your account, my amiable friend: You are worthy of a better fate; but I doubt not, that

L 4

your

your patient resignation to those ills, with which it hath pleased Heaven to afflict you, will one day meet it's just reward.

The Marquis certainly loves you most passionately; he is conscious that your marriage with him, was the effect of your dutiful anxiety for the happiness of your father: This idea fills him with those jealous fears, that render you both so unhappy; a short time must convince him of the folly, as well as the injustice of his suspicions.

I am

I am not altogether free from uneasiness myself: The silence of Lord Salisbury surprises and afflicts me. I told you of his departure with the army: Our adieus were mournfully tender; he soon after wrote to me; I would send you his letter (that you might judge from it, if I had not reason to suppose his attachment would be lasting) but I unfortunately dropped it from my pocket, in a visit I paid a few days after to Miss Granville, where I went to request her brother would take the charge of a packet from my mother to Lord Salisbury. Captain Granville had
been

been detained by illness a few weeks, and was then preparing to join his regiment with all possible expedition.

This packet in reality contained an answer from me to his Lordship's letter, with which he had every reason to be satisfied; yet strange to relate, not a line have I since received from him. I suppose, he (like many of his sex) despises a heart which has proved an easy conquest; yet I have the vanity to believe, he will one day regret the loss of what he now appears so indifferent about.

CON-

Convinced of his unworthiness, I doubt not but time and reflection will enable me to conquer a partiality which was once my pride, but which I now blush to think upon.

Every day brings fresh accounts of our success abroad : It is reported the enemy have proposed terms of accommodation so advantageous to us, that they will be accepted, and our heroes will return crowned with laurels.

We shall not remain above a month longer in the country ; I am sorry for it, for I will own
to

to you, my mind is too much disordered, to suffer me to enter willingly into the gaieties of the Court: It is a hard task to wear a smiling countenance, when the heart is filled with sorrow: This is a lesson sad experience has taught you, my Eliza. Continue to inform me of every thing that concerns you, and believe I am as much as ever

Your truly affectionate,

ANN HOWARD.

END OF VOL. I.

4 DE 58